

2007 Annual Report

Missouri Advisory Council on Pain and Symptom Management

Pain is the oldest medical problem and a universal physical affliction of humans. It is one of the most common reasons for patients to seek medical attention and one of the most prevalent medical complaints in the United States. Effective pain and symptom management presents a significant challenge for individuals, physicians, and other health care professionals. Clinical experience has demonstrated that adequate pain and symptom management enhances function and improves the quality of life, while uncontrolled pain contributes to disability and despair. Although medical science has learned a great deal about pain and symptom management in the last twenty years, this knowledge has not been well integrated into practice.

To aid in addressing these issues, the Missouri Advisory Council on Pain and Symptom Management (Council) was established by the Missouri legislature in 2003 (RSMo 192.350-355). The Council's nineteen members include health care providers, policy makers, and a pain patient. The Council was directed to submit an annual report to the Governor, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Director of the Department of Health and Senior Services.

The Council convened four times in 2007. Major activities and accomplishments include:

- Maintained an Internet web page dedicated to pain and symptom management on the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) web site: <http://www.dhss.mo.gov/PainManagement/>. Information includes guidelines, standards, statutes and regulations, consumer and health professional resources, and links to related sites. Over 9700 visits to the site were recorded in 2007.
- Supported speakers for the Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons annual conference in April and the Missouri Society of Health-System Pharmacists meeting in March to increase awareness and knowledge of pain management issues by health professionals.
- Recommended statutory revisions of definitions in the controlled substances act to DHSS. These definitions are outdated and not referenced in the act. These changes will aid in clarifying statutory language that contributes to Missouri's grade of C+ on the State Pain Policy Report Card. Discussed similar recommendations for the Intractable Pain Act with the Board of Healing Arts.
- Continued dialogue with the Boards of Healing Arts, Nursing and Pharmacy to develop a joint statement by these boards on pain and symptom management.
- Developed additional questions for the Missouri Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System survey that serves as the data source to determine the impact of pain on Missourians' lives. The 2008 survey will gather information on types of providers

consulted for pain, length of time pain has been present, and the cause of the pain in addition to pain's impact on performing daily activities.

- Partnered with the Missouri Pain Initiative in planning continuing education opportunities for physicians for 2008. These sessions will be case-based and include both clinical aspects of pain management and regulatory requirements.
- Printed and distributed copies of a pain management brochure to over 30 organizations. "Managing Pain Begins With You" was designed for consumers. Printed copies of "Target Chronic Pain", an assessment tool for health providers. These resources are available at no cost from the DHSS web site: <http://www.dhss.mo.gov/warehouse/e-literature.html>.

The Council recognizes the profound consequences of uncontrolled pain, including both personal costs and financial burden imposed on society. In order to improve the lives of Missourians, assessment and management of pain must be addressed. The Council will continue to evaluate current barriers to pain care and make additional recommendations to enable health care providers to enhance the quality of care and quality of life for Missourians.